

## In the News

### Yolo Court Reaches Out To Pro Pers

Litigants without lawyers in Yolo County may find it easier to navigate the legal system, thanks to the new legal clinics being offered by the superior court.

An article in the June 5 edition of the *Enterprise* (Davis) introduced readers to the court's free monthly legal clinics. It announced the first clinic—held at the Woodland Public Library that evening—which covered the basics of filing for legal separation and divorce.

"We provided participants with materials and explained what kinds of information the forms asked for," says Kathryn Lamoure, who is coordinating the clinics on behalf of the court. "Most people had already spent time trying to do it on their own and found it much easier with help from the court. They were very appreciative."

The Judicial Council, through the Trial Court Improvement Fund, provided grant funding for the clinics and for the court's public information desk. The court is planning additional clinics on name changes, unlawful detainers, guardianship, and other areas in which there are high numbers of self-represented litigants.

The Yolo County court received the media attention by sending a press release on the event to local newspapers. Because of such publicity, more members of the community can take advantage of the free clinics and are aware of the court's efforts to assist pro per litigants.

Other stories in the news:

**"Local Court Helps Demystify Process,"** *Bee* (Modesto), August 18, 2002

Described how the family law facilitator's office at the Superior Court of Stanislaus County is assisting more than 800 pro per litigants each month.

**"Success May Keep Teens' Courts Open,"** *Sacramento Bee*, August 12, 2002

Described the Sacramento court's youth peer court program, in which teen defendants are tried by their peers, who take the roles of prosecutors, defense attorneys, bailiffs, clerks, and jury members.

**"Domestic Violence Program Aids Latinos,"** *Record* (Stockton), July 21, 2002

Featured the Superior Court of San Joaquin County's program for Latinos that couples drug and alcohol treatment with classes on anger management and domestic violence.

**"Jury Duty Need Not Be a Trial,"** *Los Angeles Times*, June 29, 2002

In a commentary, James A. Bascue, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County, described how the court is working to improve jury service.

**"Court Looking for Public Input,"** *Pioneer Press* (Fort



The Superior Court of Yolo County is increasing its communication with the community through free legal clinics and a new public information desk (shown). Photo: Courtesy of the Superior Court of Yolo County

**Jones), June 19, 2002; "Workshop on Making the Justice System Less Confusing,"** *Butte Valley Star*, June 12, 2002

Reported that the Superior Court of Siskiyou County was seeking public comment on one of its projects—designing maps and brochures so that litigants can better navigate the courthouse.

**Free Legal Assistance as Close as a Keyboard,"** *Los Angeles Times*, June 18, 2002

Described the Superior Court of Orange County's I-CAN kiosks, which provide electronic touch screens and keyboards that guide litigants through the process of filling out and filing legal forms.

**"Homeless Court Is Called To Order,"** *Fresno Bee*, June 8, 2002

Announced the opening of the Superior Court of Fresno County's homeless court, a pilot project, which resolves minor criminal charges.

**"Chatsworth Courthouse A Reality,"** *Daily News* (Woodland Hills), June 4, 2002

Announced the opening of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County's newest courthouse, referring to users' comments that the new facility is "uncrowded, easy to use, and an asset to the community."

**"County Opens the Courtroom Doors,"** *Tribune* (San Luis Obispo), May 19, 2002

Detailed the Superior Court of San Luis Obispo County's community outreach efforts, including a new information booth and a lawyer referral desk.

**"Kern County Superior Court Expands Services in Rural Areas,"** *Press* (Shafter), May 8, 2002

Announced that the court's services are being expanded to outlying regions of the county. ■

## Professionals in Los Angeles Share Jury Service

Judges, attorneys, and other public safety and justice system professionals participate in jury service in nearly the same proportion as does the rest of the population, according to a recent study conducted by the Superior Court of Los Angeles County.

The report focuses on individuals who identify their professions as judge, deputy district attorney, deputy public defender, lawyer, crime laboratory technician, firefighter, probation officer, parole officer, and corrections officer (police officers and sheriffs' deputies were not included in the study because they are exempted from jury service by California statute). It ex-

amines jury service in Los Angeles County from June 1, 2001, through May 31, 2002, and provides the number of members of each profession who reported for jury service, the proportion called for voir dire, and those who were actually sworn to serve on juries.

"Often in the past, certain professionals were routinely excused from jury service, or it was wrongly presumed that they would never be accepted as unbiased jurors," said Superior Court of Los Angeles County Presiding Judge James A. Bascue in a press release distributed by the court. "We now know this assumption was a myth. We have

reached a point when citizens from all walks of life report for jury service and sit on juries."

### THE NUMBERS

The percentages of professionals examined in this study who were sent for voir dire and who were sworn in on juries were close to the corresponding proportions of the general public. On average, 69.4 percent of the examined professionals were sent to voir dire and 14.4 percent were actually sworn in as jury members, as compared to 73 percent and 22 percent, respectively, for the general public. Probation officers served on juries at a higher rate—24 percent.

Despite these findings, the percentages of justice system professionals who actually served on juries are markedly lower for certain groups, such as judges, deputy district attorneys, and deputy public defenders. "That is expected because they are so familiar with the courts and are likely to be well known to attorneys involved in the case," said Superior Court of Los Angeles County Assistant Presiding Judge Robert A. Dukes in the court's press release. "Still, it is highly significant that members of these professions serve on juries. We will continue to strive for a system in which everyone—and that means everyone—serves on jury duty."

● For more information on the report, contact the Superior Court of Los Angeles County's Public Information Office at 213-974-5227. ■







## TCIF Grants for Pro Per Projects

The Judicial Council designated a total of \$300,000 in grant funding from the Trial Court Improvement Fund to support the following counties' programs and services.

**Amador** Software and hardware to implement the court's community-focused action plan

**Calaveras** A model system for delivery of court services to the community

**Contra Costa** "Tell Me"—an interactive interface for self-represented litigants that will give them access to basic civil case information

**Fresno** Legal service resource manuals and information sheets for litigants and attorneys

**Kern** Translation services, a part-time legal assistant, and printing of public information materials

**Los Angeles** A pilot project for a self-help law library

**Marin** A contract attorney who will provide services in a self-help center from October 2002 through March 2003

**Mariposa** Conversion of a room in the county courthouse to a self-help center for self-represented litigants

**Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito** Hiring of a coordinator to begin implementing a tri-county community-focused action plan for serving self-represented litigants

**Napa** Purchase and printing of materials for self-represented litigants as part of the implementation of a self-help center

**Nevada and Sierra** Development of a joint community-focused action plan to serve self-represented litigants

**Sacramento** Subcontracting with a community-based nonprofit agency to recruit and coordinate court-community liaisons, who will be trained by the court and nonprofit staff to assist non-English-speaking self-represented litigants

**San Bernardino** Printing, display, and distribution of how-to packets, in

English and Spanish, for filings in family law-related cases

**San Diego** Analysis and preparation of a how-to manual on unbundling legal services for local and statewide use

**San Francisco** Purchase of case management software and an I-CAN kiosk (an electronic kiosk that provides legal information and helps litigants fill out court forms)

**San Joaquin** Assistance with the creation of self-help sections in local libraries that will include books, TV and video equipment, self-help videos, and brochures

**San Mateo** Hiring a space planner and consultant to design a self-help center

**Santa Clara** Equipment to support information booths in the facilities with the highest numbers of self-represented litigants

**Siskiyou** Translation, duplication, and distribution of educational brochures; broadcasting of self-help videos; getting public input for a project that will describe court processes through visual symbols

**Stanislaus** Development of a Self-Help Information Project (SHIP) action plan, which includes funding for technology-based information projects, preparation and distribution of informational brochures and pamphlets, networking and community resource projects, and evaluation of unmet needs of the self-represented

**Sutter** Paralegal services to assist self-represented litigants with guardianship matters

**Tulare** Promotion and enhancement of the court's self-help Web site

**Yolo** Hiring of a consultant to develop an action plan for multicultural community outreach and education; translation of materials for unrepresented litigants; and development of a public access desk

**Yuba** A flowchart for temporary and emergency restraining orders and translation of materials into Spanish

## Grants Help Courts Serve Pro Pers

The Judicial Council approved a total of \$300,000 in one-time grant funding to assist superior courts in developing and implementing community-focused action plans and programs to serve self-represented litigants. The courts can use the grant funds to pay costs such as those of consultants, equipment, and the creation and translation of self-help materials.

Award recipients are required to complete their projects by March 31, 2003. In addition,

before May 1, 2003, they must submit a final report to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) describing how their grants were used and the status of each court's community-focused plans for services to self-represented litigants.

● For more information, contact Bonnie Hough, AOC Center for Families, Children & the Courts, 415-865-7668; e-mail: bonnie.hough@jud.ca.gov. ■

Ralph N. Kleps Award for the Watsonville Juvenile Community Court Project.

**Commissioner Patricia H. Wong** (advisory member) of the Superior Court of Sacramento County succeeds Commissioner Bobby R. Vincent of the Superior Court of San Bernardino County. Commissioner Wong will become president of the California Court Commissioners Association this October. She has served on the bench of the Superior Court of Sacramento County since 1987 and was previously a sole practitioner in general civil practice. She has been a member of the Judicial Council's Subordinate Judicial Officers Conversion Working Group since last year.

**Tressa S. Kentner** (advisory member), Executive Officer of the Superior Court of San Bernardino County, succeeds Arthur Sims, Executive Officer of the Superior Court of Alameda County. Ms. Kentner has held the top administrative position in the San Bernardino trial court since 1995 and previously served in the same position at the Superior Court of Sonoma County. She is a member of the Judicial Council's Court Executives Advisory Committee and serves in working groups on trial court facilities and the Legal Services Trust Fund. Active in educational activities, she has volunteered her time on several conference planning committees.

**Susan Null** (advisory member), Executive Officer of the Superior

Court of Shasta County, succeeds Christine Patton, a former trial court executive officer who joined the Administrative Office of the Courts this year as director of the Bay Area/Northern Coastal Regional Office. Over the past six years Ms. Null has sat on several Judicial Council committees, including the Access and Fairness Advisory Committee, the Governing Committee of CJER, and the Court Executives Advisory Committee. Before becoming executive officer in 1994, she was a superior court assistant executive officer and a municipal court administrator, both in Shasta County. From 1983 to 1992 Ms. Null was the operations coordinator for Contra Costa County's municipal court.

### STATE BAR APPOINTEES

**David J. Pasternak** of the Los Angeles law firm Pasternak, Pasternak & Patton succeeds John J. Collins of Newport Beach. A former state Deputy Attorney General and counsel for the California Department of Corporations, Mr. Pasternak practices civil litigation and receivership law. He is a mediator and arbitrator for the Superior Court of Los Angeles County and serves as a mediator for the U.S. District Court in California. Active in professional bar organizations, Mr. Pasternak has been a member of the American Bar Association and the Los Angeles Bar Association since 1976, serving as head of the Los Angeles bar group from 1997 to 1998. He is an American Bar Fellow

*Continued on page 7*

### New JC Members

*Continued from page 1*

the Victim-Witness Program and ACTNET (Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne Narcotics Enforcement Team). He has served on the Judicial Council's Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee since 2000.

**Judge Jack Komar** of the Superior Court of Santa Clara County succeeds Justice Ronald B. Robie of the Court of Appeal, Third Appellate District. Before joining the bench in 1985, Judge Komar had a general civil and criminal practice in San Jose for 16 years and was deputy district attorney for Santa Clara County from 1966 to 1969. He served as the court's presiding judge from 1999 through 2000. Active in many professional and community groups, Judge Komar was president of the National Conference of Metropolitan Courts

in 2000-2001 and now sits on its board of directors. He was a member of the Judicial Council's Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee from 1999 through 2000 and chaired its Rules Subcommittee.

**Judge Heather D. Morse** of the Superior Court of Santa Cruz County succeeds Judge Leonard P. Edwards of the Superior Court of Santa Clara County. A trial court judge since 1989, she has served as presiding judge of both the superior court (1999-2000) and the former municipal court (1991-1992). Judge Morse sits on the Governing Committee of CJER and chairs the Presiding Judges' Educational Curriculum Planning Committee. She is a past member of the Judicial Council's Trial Court Coordination Advisory Committee (1997-1999) and Trial Court Presiding Judges Advisory Committee (1998-2000). In 1999 she received, on behalf of her court, the Judicial Council's



As part of their orientation to the Judicial Council, the new members observed the August 30 business meeting in the Malcolm M. Lucas Board Room at the council's conference center in San Francisco.



# Partners for Drug Courts

Justice system agencies are working together to improve collaborative courts and the people they serve.

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and the state Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs (ADP) are collaborating on several projects related to drug courts and Proposition 36. In March the AOC and ADP coordinated the submission to the Legislature of the *Drug Court Partnership Program Evaluation Report* (see story in May–June 2002 *Court News*). That report was a result of the Drug Court Partnership Act of 1998, which gave ADP and the AOC the task

of funding 34 California counties' drug courts and evaluating their effectiveness.

In a July meeting, Administrative Director of the Courts William C. Vickrey, AOC Division Director Pat Sweeten, ADP Director Kathy Jett, and ADP Deputy Director Del Sayles-Owen discussed the coordination of statewide drug court programs through California's Drug Court Steering Committee and Proposition 36 Implementation Workgroup.

Also in July, AOC and ADP representatives, along with Superior Court of Stanislaus County Judge Donald Shaver (a member

of both the Proposition 36 Implementation Workgroup and the Judicial Council's Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee), met with "drug czar" John Walters, Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), and ONDCP Deputy Directors Mary Ann Solberg and Dr. Andrea Barthwell. Participants discussed lessons learned from Proposition 36 and considerations for the drug czar's office regarding initiatives similar to Proposition 36 that are on ballots in Ohio and Michigan. The meeting was also attended by Christy McCampbell, Department of Justice;

Robert Ellsberg, California Narcotic Officers' Association; and Larry Brown, California District Attorneys Association.

Future collaboration among these justice agencies will include efforts to determine the effectiveness of drug courts in the juvenile and family court arena, where substance abuse is a contributing factor in domestic violence and child maltreatment. Other areas being considered for interagency collaboration are mental health, dual diagnosis, and homelessness.

• For more information on drug courts or the Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee, contact Nancy Taylor, AOC, 415-865-7614; e-mail: [nancy.taylor@jud.ca.gov](mailto:nancy.taylor@jud.ca.gov). ■



On July 24 Kathy Jett, Director of the state Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs (ADP), and Del Sayles-Owen, ADP's Deputy Director of Criminal Justice Collaboration, visited with Chief Justice Ronald M. George and Administrative Director of the Courts William C. Vickrey to discuss the administration of drug court programs. During the visit, Ms. Jett and Chief Justice George showed off a recent award from the National Association of Drug Court Professionals that honors California's drug courts.

## New JC Members

*Continued from page 6*

and was a member of the State Bar's Bench-Bar Coalition from 1996 to 1999.

**Ann Miller Ravel**, County Counsel of Santa Clara County, replaces Pauline W. Gee of the Office of the Attorney General, Sacramento. Over the past 25 years, Ms. Ravel has held numerous positions in the Office of the Santa Clara County Counsel, including lead attorney, deputy counsel, chief assistant counsel, and county counsel. During that time she has supervised sensitive and high-profile litigation in the county; made recommendations to the board of supervisors on strategies and resolutions; managed staff attorneys; and handled civil litigation concerning personal injury, labor, and civil rights.

## NEW CJA PRESIDENT

**Judge Gregory C. O'Brien, Jr.**, of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County will become an

advisory member when he succeeds Judge Stephen D. Bradbury as president of the California Judges Association (CJA) in October 2002. Judge O'Brien has served on the bench of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County since 1987 and was previously a municipal court judge for two years. A member of CJA for the past 17 years, he has edited the association's *California Courts Commentary* for four years. Since 1995 he has served as judicial editor of *Gavel to Gavel*, the monthly newsletter of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County.

The 21 voting members of the Judicial Council include the Chief Justice; the 14 judges appointed by the Chief Justice (1 Supreme Court associate justice, 3 Court of Appeal justices, and 10 trial court judges); 4 attorney members appointed by the State Bar's Board of Governors; and 1 member from each house of the Legislature. The council also has 6 advisory members. ■

## Collaborative Court Grants

The Judicial Council and the Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee are providing \$1 million in grant funding for California collaborative justice courts.

The funding, part of the new Collaborative Justice Drug Courts Project for fiscal year 2002–2003, is in the form of reimbursement grants. The grants will support courts such as adult and juvenile mental health courts, homeless courts, domestic violence courts, juvenile domestic/dating violence courts, family treatment courts, adult drug courts, juvenile drug courts, youth/peer courts, community courts, balanced and restorative justice programs, and any other collaborative justice court programs that include substance abuse treatment or are based on drug court models. The grants will range from \$30,000 to \$60,000, depending on the size of the county.

The request for proposals (RFP) is available to presiding judges and court executives via U.S. mail and to court grant and drug court coordinators via e-mail. The RFP is also posted on Serranus at <http://serranus.courtinfo.ca.gov/grants>.

Proposals are due to the AOC by October, and the grant awards will be announced in November.

• For more information or to request a copy of the RFP, contact John Burke, AOC, 415-865-7613; e-mail: [john.burke@jud.ca.gov](mailto:john.burke@jud.ca.gov).

## Second Appellate District hosts moot court



On July 31 the Ventura-based Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Division Six, hosted its annual Moot Court Honors Competition. Law students presented oral arguments before Presiding Justice Arthur Gilbert and Associate Justices Paul H. Coffee and Steven Z. Perren.

The case used for the competition was based on an actual case, *People v. Shawn Stanistreet* S102722, decided by Division Six on October 30, 2001. Presiding Justice Gilbert and Justice Perren were members of the panel that heard the original case. Also present for the competition were attorneys from the Ventura County District Attorney's Office and the American Civil Liberties Foundation of Southern California who had argued the original case. *Stanistreet* is scheduled to be heard by the California Supreme Court in the fall.

Pictured are (left to right) San Fernando Valley College of Law students Diana Ratcliff and Naomi Thomas, Justice Coffee, Presiding Justice Gilbert, Justice Perren, and Santa Barbara and Ventura College of Law students Rebecca Rubenstein and Alfred Vargas. *Photo: Courtesy of the Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Division Six*